



THE VOICE AND VISION FOR TRANSPORTATION JANUARY 2005

Editor: Bill Carr (Virginia Beach)

HAPPY NEW YEAR

A Message from our President, Velera Gammons



I hope everyone had an enjoyable and restful holiday season and will have a new year filled with peace, joy and good health.

We have a new year before us, an opportunity to reflect on the past and focus on the future of our organization, VAPT. A purpose of our organization's existence is to bring together professionals in the field of pupil transportation, public and private, throughout our state to help one another and to maintain awareness of everything involving the operation of school buses serving the public schools throughout this Commonwealth. Each member can be a vital part of VAPT's endeavor to contribute effective support to DOE and VAPT members in each county and city within Virginia regarding school bus safety. Please share your knowledge, ideas, and suggestions with the VAPT Board of Directors and Committee Chairpersons.

VAPT Website: www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Finance/VAPT

The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS)

NASDPTS has put a Public Service Announcement on its website --- www.nasdpts.org and the ad can be found listed under the News Center on the home page.

This print ad has already run in two issues of a magazine in the Washington DC area. You may find publications in your area of the state that would be willing to run this ad as a Public Service Announcement. Possibly, a radio and/or TV station would share the announcement with the public.

Editor's note: Each month NASDPTS provides us with up-to-date information that may be included in our newsletter. I recommend you check out their web site for good information!
<http://www.nasdpts.org/>

1. Who are the Vice-President and the Secretary of VAPT?
2. Who is a VAPT Region 1 Director?

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration will be publishing a notice in the Federal Register within the next few days that delays the effective dates of FMVSS No. 403 until April 1, 2005 and FMVSS No. 404 until July 1, 2005.

News from Arlington

County Public Schools

Vernon Roberts, a school bus driver for the Arlington County Public Schools, was featured in the November 28, 2004 edition of The Washington Post Magazine. It isn't everyday that one of our school bus drivers is featured in a magazine. Congratulations Vernon! (Submitted by James Day, Supervisor of Pupil Transportation for Arlington County Public Schools)

Answers on page 6

"Peace cannot be kept by force. It can only be achieved by understanding."
- Albert Einstein



SHAMEKA HARDY

FROM SURRY COUNTY IS THE
3rd PLACE WINNER OF THE
NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS
SAFETY POSTER CONTEST

Left to right are Christina Epps,
Art teacher, Shameka Hardy,
Bertha Thomas, Supervisor of Pupil
Transportation, and Rita Holmes,
Principal of Surry County High
School where Shameka attends
school. WE ARE PROUD OF HER.

Living Each Day

Finish each day and be done with
it. You have done what you could.
Some blunders and absurdities no
doubt crept in; forget them as
soon as you can. Tomorrow is a
new day; begin it well and serenely
and with too high a spirit to be
cumbered with your old nonsense.

Ralph Waldo Emerson
(1803-1882)

LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION Summary



House Bill 452

Leaving children unattended in
motor vehicles. Prohibits leaving
children who are eight years old or
younger unsupervised in motor
vehicles by persons who are at
least 14 years old. First offenses
are Class 4 misdemeanors; second
or subsequent offenses are Class 3
misdemeanors. Courts may require
persons convicted of violations to
attend educational programs in lieu
of other penalties.

House Bill 905

Tolls on I-81. Repeals the third
enactment of Chapter 593 of the
Acts of Assembly of 2002 to
provide that, if tolls are imposed
for the use of Interstate 81, all
vehicles will be subject to the toll.
The repealed enactment exempts
passenger cars, pickup or panel
trucks, and motorcycles from the
toll.

House Bill 1310

Headlights. Requires that vehicle headlights be lit whenever the vehicle is traveling on a two-lane undivided highway with two-way traffic.

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Does your school division distribute or make available to schools a brochure regarding School Bus Safety? If so, please send a copy to our newsletter editor at the following address:

Bill Carr
Virginia Beach City Public Schools
Transportation Services
Administrations Building (Bldg. 1)
2650 Leroy Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

Board of Directors Regional Reports



Region 1: Jim Ransom reported that at their meeting the attendance was good and welcomed a new director. A program about terrorism on school buses was

presented. June Eanes was at the meeting with DOE updates.

Region 2: John Hazelette reported that the meeting was held in Williamsburg. June Eanes was there with DOE updates. School opening issues, the shortage of school bus drivers, and the Fair Labor Standards Act were discussed. Good meeting.

Region 3: Kermit Shaffer reported that the focus of the meeting was on school opening issues, driver shortage, and walk to school bus stop policies regarding distances between stops.

Region 4: Jim Day reported that the first meeting will be held November 9, 2004 in Fairfax County, at the Lorton Center.

Region 5: Mary Eppard reported that the meeting was held at the Albemarle County facility. Trooper Gene Ayers presented a program on Drug Awareness/Preparedness, they discussed having information on Severe Weather and a visit to Sonny Merryman, Inc. facility in Rustburg. June Eanes was there with DOE updates.

Region 6: Rebecca Mummau was absent due to a death in her family. Velera Gammons and the

VAPT Board expressed their heartfelt sympathy to Rebecca and her family. Secretary, Barbara Scott will send a card to Rebecca and her family from VAPT.

Region 7: Tom Williams reported on a problem with a 2000 International school bus. Left-front (rear spring hanger).

Region 8: Dwight Elam reported there are 3 new directors in this region.

"The worst mistake a boss can make is not to say 'well done.' "

- John Ashcroft

REQUEST

Dwight Elam, VAPT Historian, is asking for pictures of last year's banquet. If anyone has pictures to share please mail or email them to Dwight in Mecklenburg County

-- 1980 VAPT HISTORY --



President: Roy E. Hopkins
Louisa County
President-Elect: Jack H. Jones
Chesterfield County
Secretary: Earl F. Stanley
Virginia Beach

Treasurer: Robert A. Devers, Jr.
Loudon County
Directors

Jules Jackson: Newport News
John R. Mothershead: Henrico Co.
Rudolph Hull: August County
A. Ray Wimmer: Tazewell County

The 4th annual VAPT conference was held at the Holiday Inn South, Charlottesville, Virginia on October 26-28, 1980. The theme of the conference was "Transporting Economics for the 80's." Keynote speaker was Sergeant J.A. Weathersbee, Virginia State Police. Sgt. Weathersbee stressed the relationship between safety and economy. He pointed out that these two run hand-in-hand when all aspects of an accident are considered.

Harold L. Combs, President of School Transportation Services presented a dissertation on transportation economics. Mr. Combs stated that inflation is impacting transportation more than any other area in education and that the key to economic survival is to maintain detailed definitive records. Mr. Bryan Bowden, Department of Corrections closed the first session with a discussion of the program of school bus renovation being instituted by the Virginia

Department of Corrections starting in 1982.

Roy Hopkins, VAPT President, and Dan Bateman, Louisa County Sheriff's Department began the Tuesday session with an informative program on gasoline accounting and investigating procedures. It was emphasized that a strict accounting of gasoline is essential if cases of theft are to be prosecuted successfully.

Richard Shirley of Marsh and McLennon Insurance Company stressed the need to identify critical incidents and unsafe acts and correct them before an accident happens. Again the need for complete and accurate records was emphasized.

Buster Bynum, Virginia State Director of Pupil Transportation, addressed the conference with a "State Update." In his presentation, Mr. Bynum thanked the VAPT Board for going to the State Superintendent and recommending additional positions in the Transportation Service Department. This did save one position.

During its annual business meeting on October 28, 1980 VAPT adopted a resolution to seek from the Virginia Department of Education a solution to the problem being experienced with the Sturdy Road Speed Governor malfunction.

Answers to the questions found on page 2:

1. James Ransom
Petersburg
2. June F. Eanes
Virginia DOE



The December 2004 edition of the School Bus Fleet magazine has a good article titled "Driver shortage returns." Our own David Pace is quoted as follows:

"Money is not a challenge for us," said David Pace, transportation director at Virginia Beach (VA) Public Schools. The problem is a driver shortage and chronic absenteeism of the existing corps.

Increased transportation demands created by the additional of magnet schools have placed a burden on Pace's ability to fill the extra routes. "While I can get the buses, I can't drag people off the street to drive the buses," he said.

The Virginia district covers approximately 630 routes per day – but averages 70 to 90 absent drivers daily. "Each of my drivers has four school assignments;

therefore, we must find ways to cover from 280 to 360 routes every day by some other means," Pace said. As a backup, he has only 30 substitute drivers.

Chesterfield County's – Walk Across America...

Remember back in September we included an article about the Chesterfield County school bus drivers, Transportation administrators, and retired personnel doing a "Walk Across America" to improve their physical fitness?

Each was given a pedometer and log sheets for recording distances each time they walked. The use of treadmills is accepted. At the end of each month drivers turn in their monthly totals and the Transportation Director's Office tally the totals for all drivers for those months.

These folks have really been walking as the following mileage they have covered shows – 4,545 miles during Sept, Oct. and Nov. They have been to San Francisco and are near Denver on their return trip. On their world trip, they are happy to finally get out of the Atlantic... they have moved past London and are about 600 miles from Moscow – miles wise.



HATS OFF TO SANDRA

ELEY a Dinwiddie County school bus driver who in the words of a parent, the School Board and the Superintendent of Dinwiddie County Schools, say, "She is a hero!"

One morning in November while she was covering her elementary school route she stopped to make a pupil stop on Highway 460. Traffic was stopped with the exception of a car directly behind the bus in the right lane. To avoid ramming the school bus in the rear the car skidded to the right side of the bus and landed in a ditch. The student's mother looked out of her window when she heard the car skidding. She witnessed the near tragedy involving her son. Her son was on the first step getting ready to step out of the bus when the school bus driver saw what was happening and pulled him back inside.

Everyone is right about Mrs. Eley, she is indeed a Hero!!!